

The December 1996 Lion

A merely parochial publication for members only of St. Mark's Parish,
Denver, Colorado.
The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America,
Western Rite Vicariate.

*"Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of
God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."*

ST LEO, POPE AND DOCTOR
† A.D. 461

On the Lord's Nativity

Synopsis:

- I. That both the origins of Christ are unutterable, and that both natures were born of Mary.
- II. Whence arose the Arian error? The mystery of the Incarnation explained.
- III. The necessity of the Incarnation, that the sins and errors of men be taken away.
- IV. That the faith and the power of the Incarnation was ever one and the same as it is today.
- V. That the Lord's Nativity is to be celebrated with pure Christian joy and not in carnal pleasure. That as Christ by being born became our flesh, we by being reborn become His.

THE truths that belong to this day's solemnity are truly well known to you. Dearly Beloved, and you have frequently been instructed in them; but just as this visible light delights the healthy eye, so to the heart that is healed there comes joy without end from the Birth of the Saviour; which we must not pass over in silence, though it can never be spoken of in a manner that is worthy of it. For the words of the prophet: *Who shall declare this generation?* (Is. liii. 8) refer not alone to that mystery wherein the Son of God is coeternal with the Father, but also to this Birth in which The Word was made flesh.

God therefore, the Son of God, equal to, and of the same nature, as the Father, and together with the

Father the Creator and Lord of all things, present in His Entirety everywhere, and exceeding all things in the order of time, which moves as He has disposed, chose upon this day to be born of the Virgin Mary, for the salvation of the world; preserving in all things the purity of her who bore Him. Whose Virginity as it was not profaned by birth, so neither was it defiled at conception. *That it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying: Behold a Virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*

This wondrous delivery of the Holy Virgin brought forth as offspring One Person, Who was both truly human and truly divine, since either nature did not so retain its separate being that there is in Him a distinction of persons; neither was the created being so joined with its Creator, that the creature became a dwelling, and He the dweller there. And though one is the nature that is received, and another that which receives, yet the diversity of each is united in such unity, that one and the same is the Son Who declares, that as true man, He is less than the Father (Jn. xiv. 28), and as true God, He is equal to the Father (Jn. x. 30).



II. This unity, Dearly Beloved, in which the creature is united to the Creator, the Arian blindness could not discern with the eyes of the mind, not believing that the Only Begotten is of the same nature and substance as the Father, basing their argument on that which was said regarding *the form of a servant*, but which the same Son of God, to show that in Him (the Divinity) is not separate, nor of another person, in relation to the same says: *I and the Father are one* (Jn. x 30).

In the form of a servant, which for the purpose of our redemption He assumed till the end of ages, He is less than the Father; in the Form of God, which He was before all ages, He is equal to the Father. In His Human lowliness He was *made of a*

woman, and made under the law (Gal. iv, 4); in the Majesty of His Divinity He is the Word of God, through Whom *all things were made*. In like manner He Who in the Form of God has made man, in the form of a servant was made man; but both one and the other are God, in the might of Him Who assumes, and man in the lowliness of that assumed. Each nature retains without diminution its separate substance, and as the Form of God does not take from the form of a servant, so the form of a servant does not take from the Form of God (Phil. ii. 6).

The mystery then of power joined to our infirmity, does not, because of this same human

nature, permit that the Son be said to be less than the Father. For the Godhead, which is One and the Same in the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, excludes all notion of inequality. For eternity has no part with time, and nature with that which is outside it. For there is but One Will, the same Substance, equal power, and not three Gods, but One God; because Oneness is true and indivisible, where there can be no diversity.

God therefore was born into the whole and perfect nature of a true man, whole and entire in all His parts, whole and entire in ours. We call these ours which God in the beginning created in us, and which He took upon Himself that He might restore. For of that which the deceiver corrupted, and which was lost to us by deceit, there is no part whatsoever in the Saviour; for though He shared in our infirmities, He was not a partaker of our sins. He took the form of a servant, without the baseness of sin; raising up what was human, not lessening what was divine. That emptying of Himself whereby the Invisible made Himself Visible, was a bending down of mercy, not a fall from power.

III. He called down to us, to Whom we could not ascend, that we might be brought back from our former bondage and from mundane errors to His eternal blessedness, because though man possessed the love of truth, yet the wavering of unformed minds was beguiled by the craft of deceiving demons; and human ignorance was drawn into diverse and conflicting errors by a learning so-called. To remove this mockery, by which minds made captive served the pride of the evil one, the teaching of the Law was not enough, neither could our nature be healed by the exhortations of the prophets; to these mortal means there had to be joined the truth of the redemption, and our nature corrupted in its very well-spring, must be born again.

A Victim must be offered as a sacrifice for our reconciliation, Who would be one from amongst us, yet free from our contamination: that this purpose of God, by which it pleased Him to wipe out the sins of the world by the Birth and Passion of Christ would extend to the times of all generations; neither should these mysteries make us confused, by reason of changing times, rather they would strengthen us, since the faith by which we live shall never vary in any age.

IV. Let there be an end therefore to their complaining who speak with impious murmurings against the divine decrees, and bring forward the delayed coming of the Lord's Nativity, as if that was not expended for former ages, which has been accomplished in this last age of the world. For the Incarnation of the Word has brought it about that what needed to be done, is done, and the mystery of human redemption did not lie idle at any time in the remote past. That which the Apostles preached, the same the prophets have proclaimed; nor was that late in fulfillment, which was at all times believed.

The wisdom and mercy of God, by this delay of the lifebringing event, has made us the more ready for His call; so that what was foretold throughout so many ages by manifold signs, by many voices, by many mysteries, would not be obscure in these days of the Gospel. And the Birth of the Saviour, which is above all wonder and above all human understanding, has begotten in us a faith which is the more enduring, the more ancient and the more frequent was its foretelling.

Not then because of some new purpose, or because of a late rising fading of compassion, did God provide for human needs, but from the beginning of the world He ordained for every man one and the same means of salvation. For the grace of God, by which all the saints have been sanctified, was increased, not begun, when Christ was born. And this mystery of so great tenderness with which the whole world has been filled, was so potent, even in its figures, that they have not received less who believed in the promise, than they who received the gift.

V. And so, Dearly Beloved, since such great gifts of the Divine Goodness have been, and with such manifest kindness, poured out upon us, the usefulness of the ancient figures has not alone been our aid who have been called to an eternal inheritance, but Truth Itself, Visible and in bodily form, hath appeared; we must therefore celebrate, not with dull, carnal joy, this day of the Lord's Nativity. And this will be worthily and lovingly fulfilled, if each one recalls of Whose Body he is a member, and to what Head he is united; so that there may be no deformity within the holy Edifice.

Reflect then, Dearly Beloved, and in the light of the Holy Spirit carefully turn your mind to perceive, Who it is that has received us into Himself, and Whom have we received within us; for since the Lord Jesus Christ by being born has become our flesh, we also, by being reborn, have become His Body.

Therefore are we both members of the Body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit: and for this cause the Blessed Apostle says: *Glorify and bear God in your body* (I Cor. Vi. 20): Who, placing within us the nature of His own gentleness and humility, begins in us that power whereby He has redeemed us, as the Lord Himself promises: *Come to me, all you that labour, and are burthened, and I will refresh you. Take up my yoke upon you, and learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart; and you shall find rest to your souls* (Mt. xi. 28-29).

Let us therefore take upon us His not heavy or bitter yoke of truth, and let us be like unto Him in simplicity of heart, in Whose Glory we desire to share, He also helping us and guiding us towards the fulfillment of His own promises, Who, according to His great mercy, is powerful to wipe out our sins, and bring to perfection in each of us His own gifts, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth world without end. Amen.

Book Review: *Slouching Towards Gomorrah* by Robert Bork

The well known phrase from W. B. Yeats' poem "and what rough beast, its hour come round at last, slouches towards Bethlehem to be born" creates a disturbing dread in my mind. Similarly Robert Bork's new book *Slouching Towards Gomorrah* gives me the same uneasy feelings that are not dissipated by reading it. The book forcefully argues that our culture is deteriorating. The root of this decay is the rise of modern liberalism which stresses the dual philosophy of radical egalitarianism and hedonistic individualism. The former strives for equality of outcome rather than opportunities and the latter is exemplified by the idea that if it feels good, do it. Bork believes that these two ideas have been incubating in Western Civilization for decades but became quite evident in America in the 1960's. It is now obvious in all facets of our society including education, religion, justice, race relations, sexuality and the Arts.

I was particularly interested in his chapter on religion. Most of us at St. Marks are well aware of the destructive elements within various churches but especially the Episcopal church which have brought us here to the haven of Orthodoxy. Bork accurately describes this and asks the vital question of where do moral values come from? Are they a natural product of civilization or are they dependent and derived from religion? The question is all the more important as we see our culture increasingly secularized and our religious institutions more peripheral and trivialized. Although Bork acknowledges that C. S. Lewis argued the existence of a natural morality, there is much evidence to support the idea that without the institutions of religion there is increasing moral deterioration.

Perhaps the best analysis and discussion is in the chapter on the effects of the Supreme Court on our culture. In case after case Judge Bork shows how the court has acted as a political and cultural institution as much as a legal institution and in so doing has seriously upset the balance of power among the executive,

legislative, and judicial branches of government. The result threatens the democratic principles of freedom. He makes a somewhat revolutionary suggestion that the way to restrain the abuse of power by the court would be a constitutional amendment making any federal or state court decision subject to being over ruled by a majority vote of each house of congress. Although controversial this idea should be a good subject for debate. Not surprisingly Bork's wit and brilliance is best on display when he discusses the law.

The Orthodox position regarding abortion, assisted suicide, and euthanasia is so clear that within the church there is little need for debate. Judge Bork calls these procedures Killing for Convenience and his arguments although not couched in theological language are compelling. He emphasizes that a general disregard for human life is spreading in our culture. Convenience is becoming the theme. "Humans tend to be inconvenient at both ends of their lives".

What positive signs does he see? I was surprised to find him doubtful and pessimistic. He thinks that the rise of religious conservatism is a good sign "but everything ultimately depends on the uncertain temper of the American people". Bork says that the term "religious right" is a pejorative to suggest that anything conservative is extreme. He believes it is "palpable foolishness to say that religious conservatives want to impose their morality on others anymore than any other participant in politics". To the degree that they have their way it will be through the democratic process. Bork suggests that the only way to fight the beast of modern liberalism is by opposing it in every arena. This book is a much needed wake up call to those of us who are simply willing to adapt ourselves to an increasing polluted cultural environment or to insulate ourselves from it.

These are only some of the issues that are discussed. The book is lengthy and perhaps has too much detail. Yet the clarity and wit of his writing is engaging. I think it is an important book well worth reading.

-Max Greenlee Jr. for The LION

Book Review: Rodney Stark. *The Rise of Christianity. A Sociologist Reconsiders History.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Rodney Stark is neither an historian nor a New Testament scholar. Rather, he is a sociologist who has published extensively on the sociology of religion. In *The Rise of Christianity* he tries to combine his own specialty with history and NT scholarship in the study of the early church. As he explains in his preface, this project has been "a cherished hobby" which he has pursued for over ten years. "What I am primarily trying to contribute to studies of the early church," he specifies, "is better social science -- better theories and more formal methods of analysis, including quantification wherever possible and appropriate" (p. xii).

Readers who suspect that this approach to the early church will make for a dull book will be pleasantly surprised. Stark has written a very interesting book. His statistical analyses are combined with historical generalizations, comparisons with modern religious movements, and vivid anecdotal evidence. Together these give an absorbing account of the circumstances under which the early church grew and eventually prevailed.

Christian readers may have one major, a priori objection to Stark's approach, so it is well to address it at this point. Stark raises the question himself: isn't his attempt "somewhat sacrilegious" (p. 4)? Or to put it in secular terms, somewhat reductionist? Doesn't it implicitly deny the providential role of God in history, especially in the work of the Holy Spirit? Stark replies, "...I do not reduce the rise of Christianity to purely 'material' or social factors. Doctrine receives its due -- an essential factor in the religion's success was what Christians believed" (p. 4). The faith was spread by human efforts, and, he argues, it is not sacrilegious to understand these in human terms.

Secular humanists and neo-pagans will, in fact, find cold comfort in Stark's book. His unifying thesis is that Christianity grew and triumphed over classical skepticism and classical paganism because it deserved to. It offered a better hope for the afterlife. Moreover, the teachings of the Church as believers applied them to everyday existence also led to a better life in this world. In the long run both the intellectual philosophies and the various forms of

paganism in the classical world simply could not compete.

Stark begins his analysis with the arithmetic of growth of the early church. His estimate that it grew about 40% per decade seems surprising initially. The Mormon Church has grown at about that rate for the past century, however. In addition, Stark cites one study on Christianity in Egypt from 239 to 315 A.D., based on actual papyri, which confirms his estimates. He establishes some other propositions about religious conversion, which help to structure the evidence in his later chapters. Converts to new religions come mainly from among the unchurched or discontented, and from those in the most worldly religious communities. Conversion spreads mostly through social networks: People convert their friends and relatives. Finally, successful religions remain

open, whereas new religious movements that isolate themselves fail.

There is a common misconception that persists in the popular imagination that Christianity was primarily a refuge for the dispossessed, the poor and the slaves (Amahl and his mom, for example). Most NT historians have rejected this view. Stark argues that, on the contrary, Christianity drew many of its converts from the solid citizens of the Roman Empire. He argues from modern parallels again: new religious movements today -- "cults" as they are called -- generally draw most of their converts from the better educated and more affluent.

Stark's third chapter attacks another common misconception: that the Jews did not convert. The fact that a remnant of Orthodox Judaism did survive in the 5th and 6th centuries does not prove this. The majority of the Jews of the Diaspora were not orthodox, but Hellenized: worldly, secular, and accommodated to classical society. Stark compares them to converts to Reform Judaism in the nineteenth century. Christianity allowed these Hellenized Jews to abandon their ethnicity without renouncing their tradition entirely. Large numbers, he proposes, did in fact convert.

Stark's fourth chapter is very vivid and compelling. Here he argues that the rise of Christianity was greatly facilitated by its superior competence in dealing with a series of major epidemics that devastated the Roman Empire in the second and third centuries. Pagans were demoralized by these, but Christians accepted them as a challenge, a test of



Triumphal entry from the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus, Rome.

December 1996

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

1 Advent Sunday 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass & Sermon 9:00 AM Church School 10:00 AM Litany & Divine Liturgy 4:00 PM Evensong	2 St Peter Chrysologus	3 <i>Feria</i>	4 St Barbara VM, St. Clement of Alexandria 11:45 AM Morning Prayer 12:00 PM Mass	5 St Sabas, Ab 9:00 AM Mass 7:00 PM Evensong	6 <i>Grace Christus BDay</i> St Nicholas 9:00 AM Mass	7 <i>Charlotte Irene Liss BDay</i> St Ambrose of Milan 9:00 AM Mass 10:00 AM Mother Cassiana Retreat at St. Luke's 5:00 PM Evensong
8 Conception BVM & Advent II 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass & Sermon 9:00 AM Church School 10:00 AM Litany & Divine Liturgy 4:00 PM Evensong	9 <i>Feria</i> 7:00 PM Vestry	10 <i>Athanasia Christus BDay</i> <i>Jonathan Green BDay</i> St. Melchiades	11 St Damasus 11:45 AM Morning Prayer 12:00 PM Mass	12 <i>Feria</i> 9:00 AM Mass 7:00 PM Evensong	13 <i>SDN Theodore Eklund BDay</i> St Lucy, VM 9:00 AM Mass	14 <i>Feria</i> 9:00 AM Mass 5:00 PM Evensong
<p>The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary falls on the Second Sunday of Advent this year. Both are commemorated. Both anticipate the Nativity (First Advent) of our Lord Jesus Christ.</p>						
15 Advent III (Rose) <i>Raymond P Tripp Jr BDay</i> 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass & Sermon 9:00 AM Church School 10:00 AM Litany & Divine Liturgy 4:00 PM Evensong	16 St Eusebius	17 <i>Kathryn S Reeves BDay</i> St Lazarus the Righteous	18 Ember Wednesday 11:45 AM Morning Prayer 12:00 PM Mass	19 <i>Feria</i> 9:00 AM Mass 7:00 PM Evensong	20 Ember Friday 9:00 AM Mass	21 St Thomas the Apostle 9:00 AM Mass 5:00 PM Evensong
<p>Please plan to help decorate the Church for Christmas on Sunday, 22 December. Lunch will be provided after the 10 o'clock Liturgy and hanging of the greens, etc. will follow.</p>						
22 Advent IV <i>Thomas PJ Paszkiewicz BDay</i> 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass & Sermon 9:00 AM Church School 10:00 AM Litany & Divine Liturgy 4:00 PM Evensong	23 <i>Feria</i>	24 Christmas Eve 4:30 PM Evening Prayer 5:00 PM Christ Mass & Carols 10:30 PM Lessons & Carols 11:00 PM Christ Mass	25 Nativity of Christ <i>Presbytera Suzanne Bundy BDAY</i> <i>Sue Green BDay</i> 10:00 AM Christ Mass	26 St Stephen, first Martyr 9:00 AM Mass	27 St John Evangelist 9:00 AM Mass	28 Holy Innocents of Bethlehem <i>Margaret V Murray BDay</i> 9:00 AM Mass 5:00 PM Evensong
29 Christmas I 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 8:00 AM Mass & Sermon 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy 4:00 PM Evensong	30 Of the Christmas Octave	31 <i>Lisa Marie Bundy BDay</i> Of the Octave, St Sylvester <i>Sandy Miller BDay</i>	<p>The Celebration on 25 December is of our Lord's Nativity and of the Virgin's Birth Giving. The Feast of the Incarnation, and the Christian date of New Year, is 25 March, the ANNUNCIATION, as the Christ Child was conceived by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin.</p>			

their faith. They stayed behind in stricken cities and took care of each other, and of pagan friends, relatives, and neighbors too. Even the simple nursing that was all they could offer resulted in a significantly higher rate of survival. This not only increased the relative number of Christians, but helped persuade pagans to convert.

Chapter 5, on the role of women in early Christianity, further advances Stark's theme of the superior survival value of early Christianity. It, too, is very graphic. Female infanticide was so widespread in classical society that over time it led to an actual decline in population. Abortion (usually at the demand of male kin) also killed or crippled many women. Moreover, child marriage and the forced remarriage of widows were common. By banning the first two practices, Christians gained more women by natural increase. By strongly discouraging the latter two, and thus giving women greater security and equality, Christianity won more women converts. Consequently, Christians had higher rates of fertility. Moreover, because Christian husbands were in short supply, many Christian women married pagan men, whom they were able to convert in turn. Thus Christian culture, by respecting life and sanctifying marriage, also contributed significantly to the rise of Christianity.

Chapters 6 and 7 deal with Christianity as an urban movement. "Pagan" originally meant "country dweller," because rural people clung longest to the Old Religion. Stark picks up the thread of his second and third chapters here, and argues that Hellenized Jews, who had communities in the major cities, not only converted themselves, but also helped spread Christianity to non-Jews. He goes on to describe the social chaos that characterized the large cities of the Roman Empire. Because of overcrowding, lack of sanitation, and crime, cities had high death rates. They were replenished by new immigrants who were rootless, often poor and homeless. (Stark does not address the bad conditions in the countryside that made the city seem a better alternative.) To these people, Christianity offered "charity as well as hope." Its evident superiority in dealing with urban problems "played a major role in its ultimate triumph" (page 162).

In his eighth chapter Stark argues that the Christian martyrs were not, as many social scientists would like to believe, psychopaths. In fact, their sacrifices were rational choices. They won not only salvation, but great fame and honor, in their own time and down to our present day. One can generalize from the extreme of martyrdom to Christian sacrifice in general. In religion, Stark says in effect, you get what you pay for. By demanding a substantial amount of personal sacrifice (from the worldly viewpoint), Christianity discouraged "free riders" who took more than they gave. It actually gained collective resources to help its believers; and it created a strong sense of community, which gave believers confidence both spiritually and emotionally.

Paganism was weak in the areas where Christianity was strong. It depended on professional priests, who had weak ties to its believers. It required funding from the state, supplemented by a few wealthy donors, rather than depending on large numbers of the rank and file. It demanded little personal commitment, let alone sacrifice. Indeed, irreverence was common in late pagan society. Pagans had little or no sense of "belonging." Their gods did not love them or even care about them, nor did pagans love each other as Christians did. Pagan culture tolerated great cruelty, and even, in its public entertainments, glorified it. "It is difficult to comprehend the emotional life of such people" (Page 214). Stark concludes, "Finally, what Christianity gave to its converts was nothing less than their humanity. In this sense, virtue was its own reward" (page 215).

- Susan Tripp, for The LION



Christ Ruler of the Universe from the Catacomb of Commodilla, Rome. c. 3rd Century.

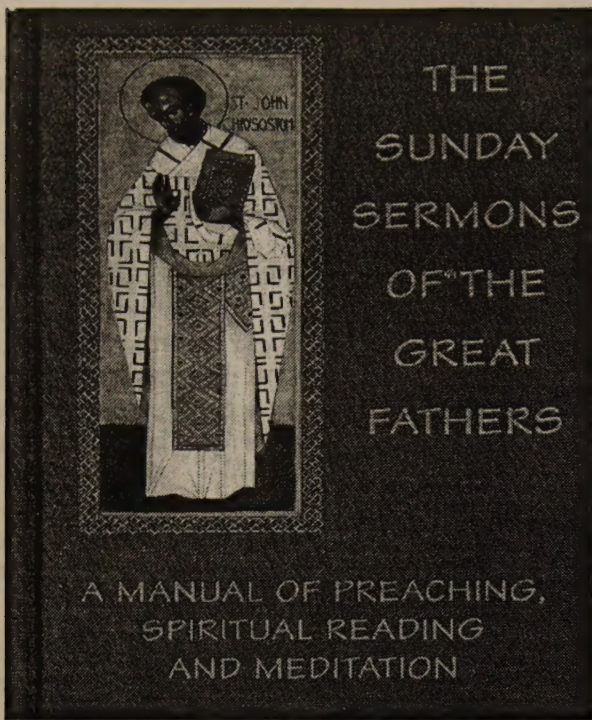
Names

from the Essay in *Orthodox Christianity and the English Tradition*, Fr. Andrew Phillips, The English Orthodox Trust, 1995.

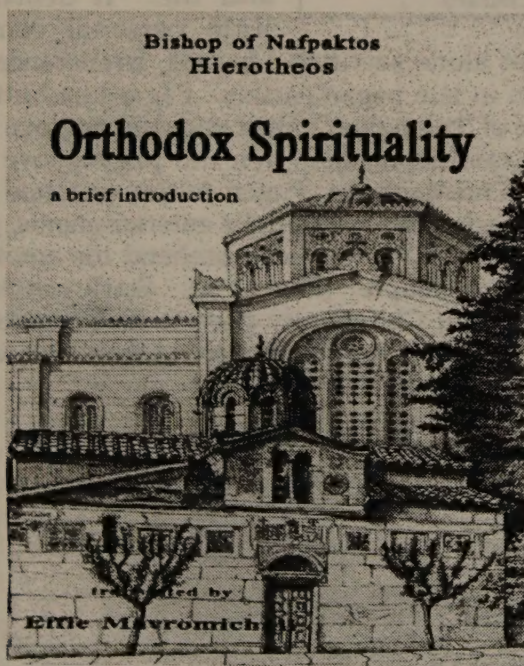
With the progressive dechristianisation of society, the use of the expression 'Christian name' is becoming less and less common and is being replaced by 'first name' or 'Forename'. Not so long ago Roman Catholics always gave their children saints' names. And Protestants used to give their children names only if they appeared in the Bible, Old Testament or New. Thus Jonathan, David, Jeremy, Judith, Esther, Rebecca, Ruth, Rachel, Deborah, Abigail and Sarah have all become popular names in Protestant-based societies. In Orthodox and Catholic societies, they sound rather Jewish and although they are saints' names, they are rare, even in monasticism. However, it does seem as if, once more, Orthodox are now the only ones to keep a tradition, that of giving their children saints' names. But many questions are posed as to what exactly a Christian name is and what names those entering the Orthodox Church should take.

First of all it is necessary to point out that someone entering Orthodoxy should not take a new name if he has one which is already borne by a saint in the calendar. We have come across two cases where men with perfectly good Christian names changed them to exotic-sounding Athanasius and Auxentius. Both were cases where in fact the persons concerned were going through identity crises. Psychologically unstable, neither in fact wanted to take a saint's name, but in fact wanted to assume another identity. Both, unsurprisingly, have since lapsed from the Orthodox Church. It would seem that the pastor should discourage uncalled-for changes of name. (Note: an additional Saint's name is often chosen when a man enters Holy Orders as a reader and subdeacon. At St. Mark's we have Readers John Mark and Tikhon, subdeacons Venerable Bede, Theodore, Deacon Vladimir, and Priest John after the Forerunner and Baptist.)

Another question which sometimes arises is whether a person with a female form of a male saint's name, for example, Nicole, should be able to keep it. In Russian practice this is only allowed in monasticism, whereas in modern Greek practice it is quite common among lay-people. Other differences between Russian and Greek practice also occur. For instance Greek women and girls called Maria or Panaghia celebrate their namesdays on Feasts of the Mother of God. In Russian practice it is held that the name Maria is too holy to be given in honour of the Virgin, for we are unworthy to bear her name. Russian Marias therefore celebrate names days in honour of other Marias, for example, St. Mary of Egypt or St. Mary, Sister of St. Lazarus. In Greece and the Balkans, names like Christos (accented on the first syllable), Sotiris (Saviour) and Kyriakos are also common. Russians tend to



The 4 volumes of *The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers* is now available from the St. Mark Bookstore for \$85 (retail everywhere else is \$129). We heartily recommend this four volume set for any thoughtful readers who desire to know God and inherit eternal life. For more information ask Fr. John or anyone who already owns these books. Our thanks to Mr. Jim Whittaker and the Preservation Press for the good work of bringing these volumes back in print.



Orthodox Spirituality is one of the most readable and effective introductions to the Spiritual life that we have seen. This book has cost \$18 and is very difficult to find. However, by trading *Missals* with the English Orthodox who can get books much more readily from Europe, we now have about twenty copies of *Orthodox Spirituality* and can sell them for only \$ 9.50 each at the St. Mark Bookstore.

find such names unacceptable, for the same reason that Russian Marias are not named in honour of the Virgin. Another custom, unknown to both Russians and Greeks is that of the Serb Slava, whereby individuals may not have individual saints' names at all, but do have a common family feast-day in honour of a particular saint. As regards saints' days there are some which fall on different days in the Greek and Russian calendars. The best-known example of this is St. Catherine whose feast falls on 25 November in the Greek Church, but on 24 November in the Russian.

Some converts to Orthodoxy change names when it is not necessary, not through some identity-crisis, but simply through ignorance. The following are names which seem to be perfectly valid Orthodox names, many of them being those of pre-Schism Western saints:

Alan, Albert, Alphonse (St. Ildefonse), Angus, Audrey, Aylwin, Barry, Bernard, Bertrand, Brigid, Claire (St. Photini or Svetlana), Dominic (equivalent to Kyriakos, Kyriaki in Greek), Duncan, Edgar, Edith, Edmund, Edward, Erasmus, Faith (Vera), Frederic (translation of Irenei), Geoffrey (St. Ceolfrið), Gerald, Gilbert, Giles, Guy, Harvey, Helga (St. Olga), Herbert, Hugh, Humphrey, Kenneth, Kevin, Leonard, Mildred, Ottilia, Owen, Richard, Robert, Ursula.

Other names, not sounding Orthodox, are often diminutives of perfectly good Orthodox saints' names. For instance:

Alexander gives Alistair
 Alexandra gives Alice and Alison
 Catherine gives Karen, Kathleen, Kay and Kittie.
 Cecilia gives Sheila.
 Columba gives Malcolm.
 Dorothy gives Dora, Doreen and Doris.
 Emiliana gives Amelia, Emily and Milly.
 Elizabeth gives Bella, Bess, Beth, Betty, Elsa, Elsie, Isabelle.
 Helen gives Eileen, Elaine, Eleanor and Norah.
 John gives Evan, Ian and Sean.
 Joanna gives Jacqueline, Jane, Janet, Janice, Jenny, Jessie.
 Juliana gives Gillian and Jill.
 Mary gives Marian, Marilyn, Maureen, May, Miriam, Moira, Molly,
 Morag, Polly and Rosemary.
 Margaret (Manna) gives Greta, Maisie, Marjorie, Meg, Pearl, Peggy and Rita.
 Nicolas gives Colin.
 Sarah gives Sally.

The lists above in no way claim to be complete, but they may be useful.

Ultimately, however, there are names which do have to be changed since they are simply not saints' names at all. What approaches are there to this question? Some change to a name which is similar to their own. An obvious example is that of those who change from Neil to Nil. Similarly Lee can easily be changed to Leo or Leon.

There are many other examples.

Some people have second Christian names. Thus someone called Pamela Mary could simply use her second Christian name as her Orthodox name. Some people simply have a favourite saint and have always wanted to be called by that name. This is the simplest case of all.

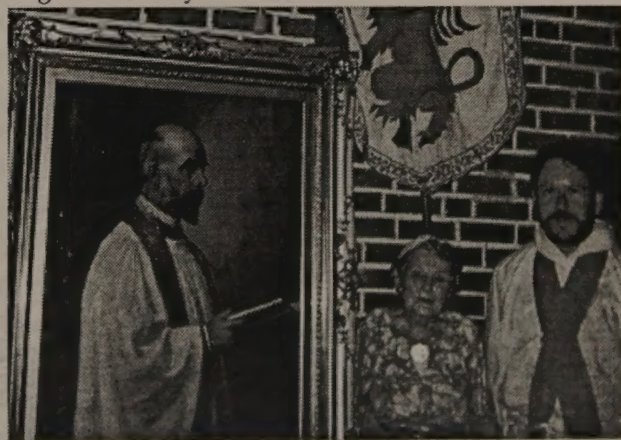
Others may wish to take on the name of someone in their family. Thus we know of one little Russian boy who was not baptised and did not have a Christian name. On baptism he took the name of his grandfather, who did have a Christian name. The result was that not only was the little boy baptised, but also that his grandfather started going to church, so bringing happiness to three generations. There is also the question of how parents should name their children. The tradition was to look in the calendar either on the day of birth, or on the eighth day at the naming ceremony, or else on the fortieth day on the day of the baptism. These are pious customs which future parents should bear in mind.

If parents choose a name simply because they like it, rather than for the saint, there is another aspect of names which is also often overlooked. This is where there are several saints of the same name. For example there are several St. Nicolases in the calendar, but in general only one is honoured. This seems most unfortunate. The Church calls us to honour all the saints, not only our favourite few. Of Anglo-Saxon Saints in the English Tradition of Orthodoxy, there are a number whose names could be used, although unfortunately some of them are now out of fashion. For boys these are:

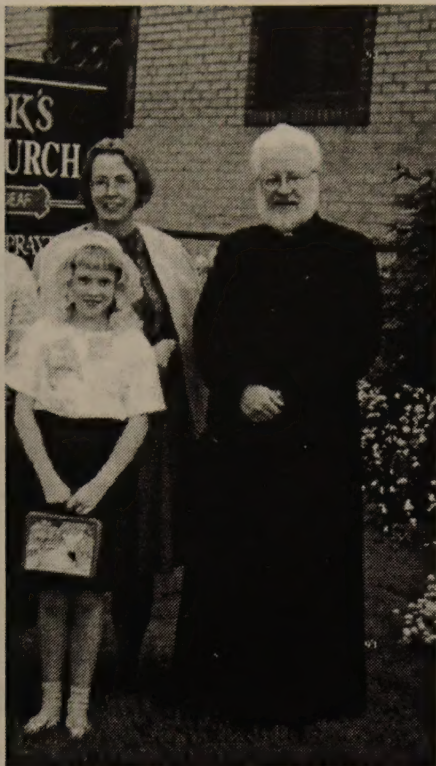
Adamnan, Adrian, Aidan, Ailred, Alban, Albert, Aylwin, Bede, Benedict, Bernard, Bertrand, Cedd, Chad, Clement, Cuthbert, Dunstan, Edmund, Edward, Edwin, Felix, Geoffrey, Gilbert, Herbert, James, John, Kenelm, Laurence, Ninian, Oswald, Owen, Peter, Philip, Richard, Sigfrid, Theodore, Wilfrid.

For girls: Agatha, Alfreda, Audrey, Eanswytha, Edith, Elfreda, Elgiva, Ethel, Hilda, Mildred, Thecla. (Also from male-saints: Adriana, Alberta, Augustina (Tina), Benedicta, Clementine, Edwina and Theodora).

We hope that these considerations will be useful for all parents and those wishing to enter the Orthodox Church. May they receive the blessings of the saints through their holy names....



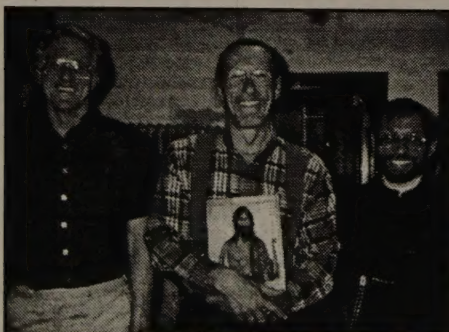
Dr. John Henry Houghton with Elizabeth E. & Fr. John



Matushka Susan Weigle Young with the V. Revd. Alexey Young and daughter Faith when the family were at St. Mark's in 1992. Susan was raised in England and enjoyed the Common Prayer Service. She reposed in the Lord 29 November 1996. *Rest eternal grant unto her, O Lord. And may light perpetual shine upon her for endless ages with thy blessed ones, for thou art gracious. Amen.*



Joseph A. Mahan with Susan Mary & daughters Jennifer Cecilia and Vanessa Bridgit on the Day they were recieved into the Orthodox Church by Chrismation.



OCOC officers Fr. Ambrose (R) with Mike Turner, Pres, Nectarios, Director. Mac Tschanz and Deborah C are board members from St. Mark's. Please remember the Advent Food Drive.



Matushka Deborah and Susan Prose with books for sale. Deborah directs the St. Mark Bookstore and Susan the St. Augustine Bookstore. These are the largest and best stocked Orthodox Christian Bookstores in Colorado. New books, icons, crosses, candles, make excellent gifts for all ages.

The LION is For Members Only of St. Mark's Parish. USA Subscriptions are \$ 10 a year. The Rev'd John Charles Connely, Rector and Dean of the Mountain Majesties and Fruited Plain, Western Rite Vicariate, the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America.

The LION is not an official publication of any entity. The views stated herein are not necessarily those of any persons, living or dead. Deborah C. Connely, staff photographer.



The Revd. David Charles Lynch with Martha and daughters Caroline and Margaret at home on Thanksgiving Day.

The Lion

St. Mark's Parish
1405 So Vine Street
Denver, CO 80210-2336
Address correction requested

PATRIARCH ATHENAGORAS INST LII
2400 RIDGE ROAD
BERKELEY CA 94709
7/97